

P S

3515

U66T6

1391

THE · THREE · SPIR-
ITS · AND · OTHER ·
POEMS · BY · WEB-
STER · P · HUNTING-
TON ·

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

PS 3515

Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf . U 66 T 6

1891

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE THREE SPIRITS

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

✓
WEBSTER P. HUNTINGTON

u

27817 W

2c

1891
GAZETTE PRINTING HOUSE
COLUMBUS O

PS 3515
466 T6
1891

COPYRIGHTED BY THE AUTHOR
1891

DEDICATED TO MY FATHER

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
THE THREE SPIRITS,	9
THE GAIN OF LIVING,	33
ART AGAINST NATURE,	34
TO G. G. R.,	36
THE DESERTED HOMESTEAD,	37
RUSSIA,	39
TO A———,	41
IN THE CEMETERY AT NORWICH,	42
TO THE BABY,	45
TO MY MOTHER'S PORTRAIT,	46
W. D. W.,	48
REHOBOTH,	50
THE AUTHOR TO HIS CRITICS,	51

THE THREE SPIRITS

THE THREE SPIRITS.

Unknown to Reason or to Faith,
Unsolved in prose or rhyme ;
Hope's mockery, the scoff of Death—
Thou mystery of Time !

Who shall explore the hidden path
That man hath never trod ?
Who tell the vanity of Earth,
The majesty of God ?

Who can do this but thou, O Soul
Immortal, loosed from clay ?
Oh, tear the darkness from our eyes
And bless us with the day !

Soar to the heights the angels know,
And in thy boundless flight
Beg of the Powers a single ray
From the Fountainhead of Light.

THE THREE SPIRITS.

Entreat that truth may be revealed,
That Hope and Faith may rise,
Till some prophetic spirit ope
The portal of the skies!

* * * *

See! The veil asunder parts!
Swing wide the gates at last!
And on the Dreamer's vision dawns
The Spirit of the Past!

THE DREAMER.

Spirit of gladness,
Spirit of woe,
Spirit of sadness
Man cannot know,
Speak to the doubting heart,
Counsel the brave!
Thou of all spirits art
Able to save!

Scan with your vision the path of the years,
Strewn with life's sorrows, bedewed with life's tears;
Marked by the crosses of women and men
Who never on earth shall raise them again.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PAST.

Peace, troubled heart : I am an aged man—
Too old to list to thy complaints or heed
Thy phantasies. My age sits heavy on me
And I oft have wished that I might one day be
A victim of my sickle ; but to me
Death never comes.

Yes, I am very old.
My locks, that in the morn of earthly things
Did shame the plumage of the raven's wings,
Are whitened with the touch of Time ; my eyes,
Once bright as lustrous gems, are dim with age ;
I stroke my beard and falter in my step.
Yet have I seen the strength of empires pass away ;
Have held within this outstretched hand the power
To bless or to condemn : to fill with hope
The heart cast down by grief ; the arrogance
Of pride-encumbered men to blast ; the thrones
Of kings to overthrow ; the power to deal
To all humanity its weal or woe.

Of Earth's mysterious gloom, when Chaos reigned
And brooding Night with piercing eye descried
Naught save perpetual darkness in the world,
I knew the infancy. To me the birth
Of mortal life within the universe

Was but the playful time of budding youth.
Thus live I still, caused by that great First Cause—
The One Omnipotent—who at His will
Brought sunlight out of darkness and displayed
His own divinity to all mankind
By planting deep within the human breast
That tender instrument, God's masterpiece,
The Soul.

The chosen people of the world
Wore out the dreary years of their first light
Beneath my gaze. Their father, Abraham,
In whom the truth divine first had its dawn,
Whose mighty heart beat in the breast of him
Who later on gave Law unto his race,
Sped o'er his earthly course marked and observed.
The passage of the Hebrew host I viewed,
When Moses through the waste of desert land
Led on the people of his God. The walls
Of high Jerusalem had not been reared,
When from the summit of the lofty clouds
The fields of Palestine beneath my feet
Lay basking in the glory of the sun.

How followed on the footsteps of the Jews
The inundation of the land with blood,
Thou knowest; how, when centuries rolled by,
The love of sacrificial offerings,

So long indulged with bloody rites by priests
Whose superstitions ruled the peevish age,
Brought on a time when naught would satisfy
A nation's craving, save that Innocence,
Embodied in a sinless Man of Peace,
Should be itself the last great sacrifice!
O thou eternal scribe, who in the Heavens
Dost keep man's record in the Book of Life,
Blot from the compromising page the deed
Of this misguided people and command
That History shall be forever dumb!
O Galilee, whose liquid surface felt
The imprint of the Master's feet, be still;
Nor whisper to the flowers upon thy banks
The fate of Him who walked above thy wave!
And Calvary, whose firm foundation groaned
Beneath the weight of that uplifted cross,
Whose soil gave to the sacred blood a grave,
Seal thou thy lips, as they did seal his tomb!

Dream on, unconscious soul, and to thy breast
Grapple the fond delusions of thy life!
Time never dies; but that which measures time,
The throb of human hearts, but for a day
Put forth their feeble efforts, and are lost.
Nations may fall, and from their crumbled dust
A hundred more may rise to power again;

And Man himself, his hopes and fears, must share
The dissolution of existing things.
Yet in the Heavenly volume of the saints
These poor events are but the paragraphs
That make the chapters in the Book of Life.
What would'st thou save from out the wreck of Earth?
Of all the good that in thy heart doth dwell
What would'st thou have in Heav'n made infinite?
Ambition? 'Tis a shining vanity
That lures thee, then enchains thee, then deludes.
Knowledge? Pause and compare thy boasted lore
With the great mind that rules the universe.
Love? Ah, this alone is the holy key
Wherewith thou may'st unlock th' eternal gates!
This is God's greatest boon to man—to love!
Whether it be on earth with human rites
Or in the consecrated court of Heav'n.
Hear my voice, my parting benediction:
Within thy spirit deep let Love abide;
And to the joys of immortality
The angels, waiting, shall receive thy soul!

*

*

*

*

Into the dark and boundless night
The phantom spirit fled.
I heard the rustle of his robes
Like the night-wind overhead,
And the gentle cadence of his voice
Seemed from the buried dead.

Alone in the falling darkness,
Alone—my soul and I!
Each dared not meet the other's glance,
Each dared not live or die,
While quaking at the very breeze
That gently passed us by.

How deep the silence of the hour,
How long the shadows grew!
How ev'ry prayer that from the heart
Was breathed to God anew
Bore up its load of hope and fear
As Heavenward it flew!

A pause, and to the open door
Another form was led:
Approached, and o'er its thoughtful brow
A frown, in passing, fled,
While fixing on my face its gaze
In accents clear it said:

THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESENT.

I am the spirit of the Present. Hear
My words, for I shall never reappear
To give thee counsel. What I now may say,
Preserve and act upon until that day
When ev'ry soul shall its transgression own
And reap the harvest as the seed is sown.

To live is to exist for better things,
Since Death, the transient visitor, but brings
The spirit out of darkness into light,
Adds glory to the day, dispels the night,
Rebukes all that is evil and makes free
The blessedness of immortality.
Yet doth thy share in future bliss depend
Upon the motives that do shape thy end.
Fulfilment of thy duty here below
Must be the test wherein thou art to show
Thy fitness for the future state. For thee
The spirit life is but a destiny.
Choice of a certain place whereto mankind
Must come at last, is not of human mind.
The narrow confines thou hast long been taught
Do separate the dead who cheaply bought
Salvation from such other sons of Earth
As in the flesh ne'er tested virtue's worth,

Exist in superstitious thought alone—
To Reason false, to Justice quite unknown !
Hence thou art not of Heav'n or Hell at will ;
The question with thy soul is, Wilt thou fill
The spirit with the love that doth beget
Eternal peace, or with a vain regret
That, where thou dost surround a lesser sphere,
Thou might'st have known a ten-fold greater ? Here
Is the choice, which to make thy soul compel.
No bondage holds thee for a seat in Hell,
For God thy free decision doth await—
Wilt make thy future compass small or great ?

The Past is buried deep within the tomb
Around whose walls th' impenetrable gloom
Hath gathered like an everlasting night.
No welcome beam, no ray of Heav'nly light
Illumes the path that leads through endless ways
Back to Creation and the world's first days.
Deeds done and motives framed and thoughts conceived,

And all the wiles wherewith thou hast deceived
Thy dormant conscience, to achieve its fall,
Breed consequences thou canst not forestall.
Repentence, in itself, availeth naught,
Save as it lifts the soul by holy thought
Up and beyond Earth's base and trifling things

And plumes the spirit with an angel's wings.
Hard though it be, and bitter like the draught
That on the Mount of suffering was quaffed :
And agonizing as the lot of those
Whom many pious men would fain suppose
Are tortured with eternal life in Hell—
Doomed to be damned forever where they dwell—
Hard though it be, thy mind must meditate
Upon this meaning phrase : To expiate.
In the nature of the Heavenly plan
Provision is not made for sinning man
To dodge between God's justice and His love ;
The Law, conceived in perfect truth above—
Itself all that is merciful and just,
Eternal, omnipotent and august—
Is the sole criterion of thy deeds,
Administers to thy actual needs,
Provides for living purpose and a cause—
In Heaven and on Earth the Law of laws !
Since then the law, though merciful, is strict ;
Though granting much doth never once conflict
With the great mind that made it to the end
That none might e'er evade it, none might bend
Its tendency and pose as saints redeemed,
When posing so they once again blasphemed
Against all right and truth : since it is true

That mercy in the Law is nothing new—
A self-existent essential of it
And not by nature one point above it—
I bid thee know, obeyed its mercy stands
Great as creation ; but, its just commands
Once broken, know no mercy, save therein
Is consequence proportionate to sin.
No human mind so weak but can detect
The tendency of evil and reflect
Upon its end ; and, so reflecting, know
The expiation it must undergo :
For as to God the attributes belong
Of all that is infinite, so of wrong
Committed 'gainst His laws, the consequence
Is likewise infinite for each offence.

THE DREAMER.

Then, Spirit, speak ! Why hast thou promised
me
A new abode ? Doth immortality,
Dispensed by God with such a lavish hand,
Grant naught but woe eternal and expand
The limit of my agony and pain,
Till ages countless as the drops of rain
That fall from Heaven's vault seem but a day

Lost in the flight of time? Is he astray
From holy truth who in his heart believes
That in some future state the soul retrieves
Somewhat of error and mistake indulged
Ere to his puny mind hath been divulged
His destiny, the secret of his fate?
Doth God grant knowledge only when too late?
Speak, I implore thee, though the speaking cost
The pain of certainty that I am lost!

THE SPIRIT.

Thy doubts, born not of thought, but sudden
fear,
Before the light of truth must disappear
As overwhelming darkness fades and dies
When morning's sun illumines the eastern skies:
And in the glory of the new-born light
Thy mind's awakening shall be as bright
As budding dawn unfolding to full bloom,
Or ray from Heav'n, dispelling endless gloom!

Have I not said that in the realm from whence
Thy soul did'st emanate, the consequence
Of evil deeds and God's law disobeyed
Shall be in honest measure truly weighed
With thy ill conduct and thy conscious guilt?

Thy faith, upon the firm foundation built
Of perfect confidence in love divine,
Should yield conception of God's great design.
Of life immortal the celestial breath
Was not breathed in thee that a living death
Through all eternity should be thy lot—
Accursed in Hell and upon Earth forgot.
This bear in mind : Eternal law is just ;
It sanctifies no sin, nor doth it thrust
A saintliness upon a few elect,
And in the act all other souls reject ;
It provides no Innocent's sacrifice
To insure the guilty in Paradise ;
But sternly speaks, in accents clear and strong,
“ Let him fear no evil who knows no wrong.”

 The distant future thou canst not define ;
The Past is dead—the Present, only, thine.
Then grasp it while it lingers, ere it fades
Into that silent depth where grieving shades
Bend mourning o'er the grave of wasted time.
I see the mighty spectacle—sublime
And infinitely sad. The deep-drawn sighs
Of spirits weeping o'er the spot where lies
Lost Hope, with Love and fair Ambition near—
All that we hold in life's sweet hour most dear—
Are wafted to me on the midnight air.

Nothing but tears and vain regret is there!
And wilt thou, too, lay in that silent grave
The qualities that God in kindness gave,
That thou might'st bear in life a noble part
And in eternity a happy heart?

Beware! Existence is no paltry thing:
It hath an equal power to bless and sting.

Thou hast heard. Let, then, thine attentive ear
With equal earnestness incline to hear
The whispered counsels of thy inmost soul:
Give Conscience in all things complete control:
Make it the ruler o'er thy mind's domain,
And like the music of some Heavenly strain
Whose gentle harmony, low, sweet and clear,
Pervades the universal atmosphere,
Until the baser senses feel the spell
Of influences, they can not repel,
Its guiding voice shall cause to fall inert
Thy wrong propensities, and shall assert
Its wondrous power to keep thee undefiled
Till thou with God in peace art reconciled.

*

*

*

*

So saying, with a silent tread,
Like one who walks amongst the dead
 In some secluded burying ground ;
Or as a thoughtful priest might pace
The corridors of some holy place,
 Betrayed not by a single sound ;
The Spirit fleet in soft retreat
 Glided into the great Unknown,
While whispered the breeze in an undertone.
 “ A vision seen, a vision flown ! ”

Seen, and forever unforgot !
Flown, yet around the hallowed spot
 Where stood the Spirit a moment since,
As a rose its sweetness doth distil,
There lingered then and always will
 A consciousness to all-convince
Th’ uncertain mind, by doubt made blind,
 That One had been there who had graced
The courts of Heaven and embraced
 The joy of all things pure and chaste !

Thus musing on the strange portent
Of ev’ry wonderful event
 That passed before me like a dream,
I caught the sound of voices singing—
Now softly sweet, now loudly ringing—

That to the list'ning ear did seem
A Heav'nly strain, a glad refrain,
Bearing the ecstasy of bliss
Of those in a fairer world than this
Who living had done least amiss.

As, gazing into the Promised Land
A soul on the verge of Heav'n might stand,
Hearing the music of the spheres,
I paused, my heart two worlds between,
And heard a hymn of powers unseen—
The harmony of untold years.
And this is the song th' angelic throng
Sang of the triumphs of sacrifice
And telling of One who should arise
To speak the glories of Paradise!

THE CHANT OF THE ANGELS.

Eternal God! Thou Perfect One alone
Of all who bow the knee before Thy throne—
Father of all—
Thou who didst think, and with the thought evolve
Th' material universe, and dissolve
The sweets of life within the soul of man;
We do recall

The wondrous mercy of Thy mighty plan
Conceived ere other life than Thine began!

And dost Thou now to favors multiplied
Like grains of sand upon the wild sea-side

Year after year,

Add this last token of Thy tender love
For erring Man, who didst Thy pity move
When pierced him first of deadly sin the fang;

When the first tear,
The crystal symbol of his grief, o'ersprang
Its bounds, the sad betrayer of a pang?

Speed the Spirit on Heav'nly mission sent!
Haste his departure, strengthen his intent!

Cause Earth to know
That Truth and Love survive and Mercy pleads,
Though oft the heart, stricken and wounded, bleeds,
Shuddering that no helper lifts the veil

Of endless woe!

O Father, let Thy messenger prevail,
Teaching that faith in Thee can never fail!

THE SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE.

Seeker of truth, who after righteousness
Doth hunger and thirst as mortality
Longeth for that which is infinite, Peace !
Thou who dost meditate on sacred themes,
Communing with another higher world
Whose spirit forms, on wondrous errands sent,
Appear before thee and their counsels give
Of holiness, of virtue and of love ;
Thou mortal, first in history, for whom
Time, backward turning from his onward course,
Lets fall his secrets from his Spirits' lips ;
Who sees the past revealed and hears proclaimed
The necessities of the present hour,
As Heav'n gives welcome to the wandering soul
Greets thee the day of thy enlightenment !

I come, apostle of the living truth,
Prophet of things that shall be, exponent
Of things that are and have been. Dost thou hear
An echo from the distant land, a sound
Of great rejoicing, as Solomon heard
Immortal psalms, sung by a thousand tongues,
Resounding in the temple of the Jews ?
It is the deep, celestial harmony
Of angels breathing worship to their God.

And thou, too, in the hour that sets thee free,
When on thy wondering gaze there breaks the dawn
Of an eternal day, mayst be of them.
Thy voice may join with theirs when Heaven peals
With the glad praises of the King of kings ;
And sharing in their song, so mayst thou share
Their best conceptions and their destiny—
To know the sweet repose of perfect peace ;
Not equally with each companion soul,
But to thy uttermost.

Yet here awhile
In the brief season that men call Life,
Ere Earth reclaims the graceful form she gave
And manly beauty yields to loathsome dust ;
While still the soul clings to its mortal home,
Looks calmly from thy eyes, and on thy brow
Reflects the light of its own purity ;
Here, now in sorrow, now in happiness,
In joy and grief, through tears and pleasant smiles,
Shalt thou live on the life allotted thee.

If blind to truth, seek not to see all things :
The tired brain must needs abjure its thought.
If Reason satisfy thee not, beware !
For where the Reason falters there comes Doubt,
Thrusting his base deceptions in thy path,
While Faith is left to die upon the way.

Ask not, then, why thou livest, if to think
Of living be a toil ; gird up thy faith,
And it shall all suffice, as at the feast,
Though little be consumed, thou hast thy fill.

Yet, if thou canst conceive the primal cause
Whence spring the germs of life, the massive bulk
Of the great material universe
And all the myriad spirit forms that live,
Some seen of mortal eyes and millions more
Beyond the dark, impenetrable veil
That screens what is to come from that which is ;
Conceive thyself a part of God Himself,
The incarnation of His thought divine ;
Living, because He lives, though all-endowed
With power of shaping thine own destiny.
Thou canst be what thou wilt ; not in a day,
But in the end ; for death is but a change,
In which we hear the sweet and tender words
Of those who, standing on the farther shore,
Beckon us on with kind and gentle smile,
Bidding us be of courage, since we come
Into their midst with welcome everywhere.
So shalt thou share their struggles and their hopes—
A tearful witness when some spirit falls,
But joyful when he rises ; thus thy life,
Like theirs, shall be of progress and of love—

Bright as the morning sun, though oft the clouds
Dim its refulgent beams and cast a gloom
Over the landscape of thy fondest dreams.

Be thou always resolute ; bear thyself
Not too exulting, but with dignity
Born of the spirit's knowledge of its end ;
As one who on his person doth sustain
The signs of perfect confidence and hope.
Hold not too lightly in thy mind's esteem
The trials death will open unto thee ;
Nor yet affect unreasonable fear
Of what the future may contain for thee.

Dreamer, thou livest in a time and age
When wicked phantoms of a cruel fate,
Long taught thee to be waiting for thy death,
Are falling, one by one. Beyond recall
Many are lost and buried in the Past,
As many more shall be ; they are dead,
Unwept, unheeded, and almost forgot.
Let none alarm thee with a well-wrought tale
Of an eternal punishment in store
For disbelievers in a certain creed
Or scorers of a most uncertain faith.
Severe will be thy expiation, true ;
And infinite, but not forever laden
With a crushing, ceaseless pain, greater tenfold

Than sin could merit at the hands of God.
Surely thou knowest one may suffer much
And yet not heed. Yesterday I sinned ;
To-day the pangs of vain remorse possess
My every sense ; to-morrow, or as years
Like fleeting dreams pass by, I have forgot
That I have sinned at all ; nor is the least,
The smallest weight of consequence removed
Or blotted from my deepest heart thereby ;
For as 'tis true that mortal suffering
Is often measured by its falling short
Of that which constitutes true happiness,
Rather than by that which seems its deepest woe,
So in the land that lies beyond the grave
The lines of consequence are visible
More clearly to the holier spirit's eye
Than to the sinner who indulged the sin.
The great Creator has but made his law,
That justice cannot be revenge, and sin
Shall its atonement earn, of such a kind
As ev'ry soul is given strength to bear.

Man cannot ask for more than he is given.
Endowed with that creative faculty
Of mind and heart that shows a handiwork
Wrought by Omnipotence, and conceived
In the very ecstasy of power

For a destiny higher than decay ;
And with his promised immortality
Displayed upon his outward, worldly self,
As if his Maker's genius sought to prove
The argument of the soul's existence
To the world—thus made from God's own spirit
And formed as one whose soul can conquer Death,
Man is the masterpiece of creation.
And rarest and most priceless of the gifts
That in him bear fruition to his soul,
Are those two gems of immortality :
Faith, Hope.

As dew upon the tinted rose,
Or rain on tender vegetation falls,
So these congenial kindred qualities
Refresh whate'er in spirit life they touch.
Then slight not these to make thyself more strong
In things that will inure less to thy good !
Earth hath no comforter, nor Heav'n a boon
Such as was given thee when in thy breast
Faith had its birth and Hope first sprang to life.
Thou wouldst not lose thy memory, nor think
To profit by the loss of health or limb,
And yet, through heedless scorn and long disuse
Of gifts bestowed to elevate thee most,
Wouldst suffer such to languish in decay

And leave thee helpless in thy vaunted strength.

Faith is the deep, wide harbor of the soul,
Where the weary mariner, long at sea,
Feasts his delighted eyes upon the shore,
And satisfied that all is safe and well,
Sinks, like the waves receding, to his rest ;
And Hope, the star of promise in the skies,
Casts one last beam upon his prostrate form.

*

*

*

*

I had but dreamt. Yet as I woke
Methought I heard a voice that spoke,
And in the stillness of the night
Pronounced an admonition—" Write !
What thou hast heard comes from above,
For I AM GOD and ' GOD IS LOVE ! ' "



THE GAIN OF LIVING.

Think not that in one life's completed span
There is less joy than sorrow ; were it so
Then all that live were underneath the ban
Of that mysterious shadow, which doth throw
A strange, odd darkness over all below
That doth possess in life's First Cause no share :
For, since existence takes its peaceful flow
From rising in the Infinite, the heir
Of such divinity must fitly bear
The imprint of his Maker's blessedness.
Thus ev'ry soul is born not to despair,
But hath its meed of pleasure, more or less :
And though its earthly flight be high or low,
It hath more cheer than grief, more joy than woe.



ART AGAINST NATURE.

When some great painter a grand work essays,
Puts brush to canvass in a lofty theme
Of clouds or sky or sunlight's piercing rays,
The world must pause to note each golden gleam
And sing the artist's everlasting praise.

Each touch of art that makes the picture true,
Each line that shows the present master hand,
Each fleeting cloud hard striving to subdue
The glancing shafts of light shot o'er the land;
Each color blending with the azure blue,—

Each mark of genius—is proclaimed to mean
A thought that life from inspiration draws.
The critics haste to criticism keen,
And wonder and exclaim, because
A *man* hath pictured forth so fair a scene.

But when th' eternal God in outlines pure
Reveals the dome of Heaven overhead,
To charm the soul, the senses to allure,
Man, only to the artificial bred,
What he might well adore can scarce endure.

So often the best things in life we see
Hardly to remark, almost to ignore ;
The gifts least loved are those God makes most free,
And bounteous Nature, yielding up her store,
Receives the thanks of heartless apathy.



TO G. G. R.

When memory lightens the effort of thinking,
And prompts one's austerity so to unbend
That a glass of good wine is worthy the drinking,
'Tis sweetest to drink to the health of a friend.

So, Ruggles, let never the bowl be forbidden
That promises closer our friendship to knit :
'T were rarest of vintage if in it were hidden
A taste of thy humor or spark of thy wit.

If asked once of thee, Is life worth the living ?
The need for an answer could hardly appear :
'Tis found in the fact of thy constantly giving
Some pleasure to others who know thy good cheer.

For knowing, 'tis written, is surely believing,
And what better knowledge, indeed, can there be
Than that given those who have long been receiving
The proofs of the manhood that dominates thee ?

Like the stream that thou lovest descending the
mountain,
Refreshing the fields in its fall from on high,
Thy life and its sunshine is drawn from a fountain
As clear as the light it reflects from the sky.

THE DESERTED HOMESTEAD.

Lonely, forsaken, desolate it stands,

Its sombre outline carved against the sky :
Unbroken solitude envelops all,

Save for the wild bird's shrill, discordant cry,
The bay of hunters' hounds on distant hills,

The music of the winds or noisy flow
Of waters rushing on in pebbly rills.

'Twere sweet, if not so sad, to feel thy spell,

Deserted homestead ! The quickening heart
Thy solemn grandeur wakes to solemn things :

Impulsive recollections swiftly dart
Through sympathetic minds, as thy impress

Is sealed upon the memory of those
Who contemplate thy passing loneliness.

The rank weed grows in ruthless wantonness

Where once the feet of children pressed the stones :
The hush of Death is on the chamber walls

That echoed long ago their happy tones.
The loathsome spider weaves a silken net

Where once the watchful, prudent housewife
reigned

And rose above her sorrow and regret.

The sun that smiled upon thee years ago,
In those long past, almost forgotten days,
Is still the same unchanging visitor ;

The same moon's silvery, calm and steadfast rays
Still light the trellis where the grapevines climb ;
The same breeze stirs the leaves to gentle sighs
As lulled the meadows in the olden time.

But those who knew the countless peaceful charms
That Nature set around thee, all are gone !

The graveyard on the hillside tells the tale
Of how the Earth has claimed them, one by one ;
And the old homestead, that after all survives,
Doth seem to speak unto the thoughtful mind
The simple lesson of their simple lives.



RUSSIA.

Land of the Autocrat and slave!
Land of the royal, sceptered knave,
If kings have ruled by right divine,
Then cursed be God, who gave thee thine!
Then Heav'n is Hell and virtue vice;
Then hate for love may well suffice;
Then honesty is so uncouth
That foul corruption mocks at truth!

Were dread Siberia's bloody soil
In travail with maternal toil,
Like some huge monster giving birth
To monsters, from the depths of earth
Each long drawn out and labored groan
Would pierce thee on thy gilded throne,
O Emperor! From filthy mine
Where imps erect a grimy shrine
To worship Satan and the Czar;
In dungeon cells that peep of star
Or ray of sun has never blest,
Thy victims' souls might break their rest
And fly from every slimy lair
To catch thee in a grewsome snare!

From silent tombs and depths remote
The bones of those thy anger smote—
Who in the flesh thy grace implored—
To such misshapen forms restored
As most to fright thee, might arise
To rend thy heart, to blast thine eyes!

O evil mockery! O shame
Of all mankind! A Prince's name
Is greater than a people's life!
An armed host prepared for strife,
A throne by slavery upheld
The forces of an Empire weld;
And over all is born to rule
A graceless tyrant, or a fool!

Speed, tardy justice, speed the hour
When Vengeance may his prey devour:
Let royal blood in torrents pour.
If Czars and despots reign no more!

TO A——

A FRAGMENT.

Thy mind and mine have followed in the course
Of pure and holy love, that takes its way
Over all obstacles that interpose
To block the path of passions less divine.
In sorrow I have loved thee, and thou me ;
In joy and gladness, too, we were as one,
When passing clouds obscured the happy sky,
Or, shifting, did disclose the burning sun.
As in the firmament the peaceful stars
Give forth the radiant light of Heaven
Like looks from angels' eyes : as thro' the wood
The constant stream winds heedless of its course,
So hath our love been—infinite in change.
Like fleeting seasons' rounds, but always blest.
Through all the strange vicissitudes of life
I ne'er have loved thee but with all my heart :
With all my strength and mind, with all my soul :
So do I love thee still, and ever shall—
Forever and forever.

IN THE CEMETERY AT NORWICH.

In ev'ry soul there is a tender strain

That wakes and echoes, when the hand of Time
Draws from the heart a mild and sweet refrain
That rises from some memory sublime.

So have I felt, when drawn by pensive thought

My footsteps bore me from the hillside down,
Midst massive rocks that years have never wrought
A change in, to the graveyard of the town.

That quaint and ancient village of the hills,

Where my forefathers, wandering, first took heed
It was a lovely spot, free from the ills
That they had fled—a place of rest, indeed.

For these were men of such heroic mould

As feared no outward danger, shunned no toil ;
The liberty of conscience more than gold
They strove to find on new and untried soil.

What was to them the forest's loneliness,

If thought were free and persecution past ;
If tyranny ceased longer to oppress,
And life endured with honor to the last ?

To seek the truth where they thought most to find ;
To worship God as they conceived it best,
And teach the priceless lesson to mankind,
Was all the simple mission of their quest.

The trackless plain should know the reaper's blade,
The hard rock yield its wealth of treasured store,
And boundless woodland's dark, forbidding shade
Should hide the bosom of the earth no more.

The startled breeze that bore the warrior's cry,
And bound the ears that heard it with a spell,
Should serve instead with each delicious sigh
The tranquil victory of peace to tell.

The spot that marked the wild beast's hidden lair
Should blossom as a garden decked with flow'rs,
Where mothers' eyes might note with tender care
The happy flight of children's playful hours.

With such a purpose these bold pioneers
Braved all that evil Fortune might ordain :
Too noble to retreat, too stern for tears,
They never learned to falter or complain.

How well their work was done the years' swift flight
Hath proven unto us who follow them :

How well they labored in the cause of Right,
And gave to Freedom's crown its brightest gem.

No eulogy can add unto their fame,
Nor praise their simple merit magnify :
In death they leave no heritage of shame,
But rather teach us how to live and die.

Thus here they share at last the common lot
Of all who earn from earthly cares release ;
Their privilege within this grassy plot
To know the rest of everlasting peace.

O God inscrutable, if Thou didst speak
And call them from this city of the dead,
In mercy send their spirits to the weak,
Who need by their example to be led.



TO THE BABY.

Child of the morning, whence comest thou here,
With a gasp and a struggle, a sob and a tear—
From the North, from the South, from the East, from
the West.

Nestled close in her arms on the fond mother's breast?
Hast thou come from the realm of the Silent Un-
known?

The journey is long—didst thou come all alone?

Thine eyes are as blue as the waves of the deep,
Thy brow is as fair as an angel's in sleep;
Thy skin is as soft as the velvety down
Of the flowers that bloom 'neath a sunshiny crown.
Who sent thee? Who marked thee for Earth and its
woe,

Its joy and its sorrow?—Canst tell?—Dost thou
know?

Sweet child, there is knowledge that passeth our ken;
There is wisdom not given the children of men.
We grope in the darkness like slaves of the night;
Our fancy is folly—we know not its flight.
Thou art come, thou art gone; whether distant or
near,
We only can know thee how precious, how dear!

TO MY MOTHER'S PORTRAIT.

O gentle portrait of that gentler face,
So marked by all the sweetest gifts that grace
The woman's countenance, the mother's heart,
Do thou such temper to thy son impart
That well he may his humble efforts raise
To add new lustre to thy shining praise !
Blest, had he known the kind maternal care
Which more than finite wisdom planted, where
The seed might grow in hearts made but to love—
At length to blossom in the fields above !
Sweet were the lessons to be learned from thee,
Had God in mercy willed it so to be :
Hadst thou not entered on that other state
Where mortal eyes may never penetrate.

But happy still the lot of him whose mind
Can trace thee, in the regions undefined :
Whose faith may pierce the false, deceptive glare
Of Earth's poor honors, and behold thee where
The weary soul casts off its heavy load,
To cross the threshold of the blest abode.
Thus often in the calm and peaceful night,
When grosser cares are wont to fade from sight

And vacant shadows on the wall appear—
Earth fleeing fast, and Heaven drawing near—
I on the border of the Future stand,
And, awe-struck, view thee in the promised land;
While, as I see thy glory in the sky,
I know, indeed, the soul can never die.

So would I live thy pure and blameless life
That, when I view my Past, it may seem rife
With righteous deeds and holy thoughts, as thine;
That Love within the Present may be mine;
That Truth to me the lesson may impart
To meet the Future with a steadfast heart.



W. D. W.

A man of such surpassing grace
That kings might envy his address :
Whose acts for ev'ry time and place
A perfect fitness do possess :

A man of pure and ready wit
Whose shafts are free from poisoned stain,
But strike where they are aimed to hit
And leave no rancor and no pain :

A man of such unselfish heart,
Of mind so lofty and serene,
Who knoweth manhood more than art
And hath no unclean thought to screen :

A man of patience strangely rare,
Forgiving, gentle, kind and just :
Bold in the right, but swift to spare,
Quick to uphold, slow to distrust :

A stranger to unseemly pride
Or affectation's poor deceit :
In sorrow and affliction tried,
He drank the bitter and the sweet.

A man of such superior mould

As all that's base soars far above :

Who daily doth some charm unfold

To win a friend's unselfish love.

That is a friend of mine.—His name ?

Ah, that is not for me to tell.

If thou hast known him, his fair fame

Will teach thee that thou know'st it well.



REHOBAM.

II CHRONICLES, XI. 21-23.

Good Rehoboam was a king
Who reigned in days of yore :
His household numbered "eighteen wives,"
And "concubines threescore."

For 'twas a custom honored then,
More oft, indeed, than now,
For kings and courtiers to take
A frequent marriage vow.

And this kind of extravagance
Was sometimes overdone,
So that a man with consorts ten
Oft wished for only one.

But Rehoboam, we are told,
"Desired many wives :"
And that they rued it or complained
No evidence survives.

And thus the king, so Scripture saith,
"Dealt wisely " many years :
And when he died he well deserved
His eighteen widows' tears.

THE AUTHOR TO HIS CRITICS.

Criticise with impunity,
 Scan with particularity :
Now is your opportunity
 To mitigate the rarity—
So marked in each community—
 Of truly Christian charity !

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 939 291 0